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ABSTRACT

This paper describes four Arizona schools' peer tutoring programs in reading and study skills for specific content areas. The first, at West High School, stresses training of tutors in self-awareness and specific teaching techniques. A special time is set aside for tutoring; a waiting list attests to the program's success. At Central High School, the tutoring program in study skills and subject areas is administrated through the National Honor Society. At Westwood High School, tutors work four days a week and spend one day a week in a group session. Regular academic credit is given for tutoring, and teaching focuses on subjects ranging from driver's education to social studies. The freshman communications program at Alhambra High School involves tutoring in English, reading, and social studies by upperclass tutors in a small-group setting. Since these programs emphasize teaching reading and study skills as they relate to several different content areas, no pretesting or posttesting is done. The need for evaluation of the tutoring experience is, however, stressed. A guide for training student tutors includes suggestions for teaching the basics of administration and structure of the program, as well as for promoting academic skills and personal growth. (KS)

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THROWING A LIFE SAVER TO CONTENT READING THROUGH PEER TUTORING

by

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PEER TUTORING

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

To provide the background for the place of the Peer Tutoring Program within the Phoenix Union High School District a synopsis of the development of the reading program is given below:

1971-1972 School Year

The District indicated a five-phased improved reading instructional program would be implemented. Students would be given remedial reading as needed, a District Reading Supervisor would provide leadership to the program; an Interdisciplinary Reading Resource Teacher Program was initiated at West High School to provide in-service education to content-area teachers. During this year at West High School, the Peer Tutoring Program was intiated.

1972-73 School Year

The Phase II Reading Program implemented a requirement that all students will demonstrate a ninth grade reading proficiency starting with the graduating class of 1975. A competency-based reading test was developed, field-tested and given to all freshman and sophomore students. Reading Departments were established at all schools in the District with separate fiscal and administrative responsibilities.

1973-74 School Year

Every entering student was given a reading class as part of his English requirement. Instructional Aides were employed to help reading teachers implement a diagnostic/prescriptive approach. An increase in Peer Tutoring Programs occurred at two high schools other than West High.

1974-75 School Year

The reading requirement was implemented with the senior class, but no senior was held back from graduation due to not passing the MRPA. The reading budget in the District doubled from the 1971-72 school year, and a total of sixty reading teachers were hired for eleven System schools. Peer Tutoring Programs expanded to three additional sites for a total of five sites. Math competency and a requirement for mathematic skills was initiated.

1975-76 School Year

The second senior class meeting the minimal competency requirement in the District of the five-phased instructional program was com-

pleted. The five schools having Peer Tutoring Programs expanded their services. The Phoenix Union High School District was noted as one of two-hundred and twenty-two effective reading programs throughout the United States (NCTE Publication).

In conclusion, the Phoenix Union High School District initiated a Peer Tutoring Program in the 1971-72 school year. Through its six years of experience, it has developed a viable program to provide one-to-one supportive help for students.

We will look at three programs within the Phoenix Union High School District and one in the Mesa High School District that is an outgrowth of these programs.

PHOENIX UNION HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

WEST HIGH SCHOOL

The first program to be explained is the program at West High School which is the original Peer Tutoring Program.

West High School, in the Phoenix Union High School District, has been involved in a Peer Tutoring Program for six years. The Tutoring Program from the betinning was received enthusiastically by the citizens of West High School and at times there have been as many as seventy well-trained and efficiently functioning tutors working on a one-to-one basis with their peers.

The ingredients that seem to be necessary for a successful program as we see it are:

1. A person whose primary duties are to work with the Program.
2. A space or room that the Program can call its own.
3. Tutors and students or students being tutored.
4. Materials to work with.

The tutors are actively recruited and screened by the Program Director. A number of them are former students who have been tutored. A tutor need not be a straight A student, but does need to be functioning successfully at grade level. A tutor must have an excellent attendance record, be self-directed, able to work independently, be fairly mature in actions and have the capacity to care for others.

The tutors go through an intensive two-week training period in which they explore basic learning patterns, examine their own learning style and try to look at why they may not have met the frustrations that many of the students being tutored are experiencing in their classes. They learn how to plan a simple lesson and learn about some of the things that make for a good learning environment.

After the training period, they are matched in capability, availability and personality with a student waiting to be tutored. The tutors have a great deal of say about this and are promised they will never be put into a tutoring position in which they do not feel they can be successful for whatever reason - academic or personal.

The program is voluntary for the students or students to be tutored, most coming in on their free or study hall time. They remain in tutoring until they and their tutor feel they can function on an independent level in whatever class they have been receiving help. Some are in the program a few weeks for help in a crisis situation; others may be in tutoring for an entire semester or year.

The actual tutoring sessions are one-period long on three consecutive days a week. Monday is a group, or personal awareness, day for the tutors; Friday is a day for additional skill lessons or a planning day. This part of the program, called "Aggressive Support", is seen as absolutely essential for the continuity and cohesiveness of the group and the program.

The students bring materials from their regular classes which are the basis for instruction in the tutoring sessions and are supplemented by materials in the Center, many of which are games and student-constructed activities.

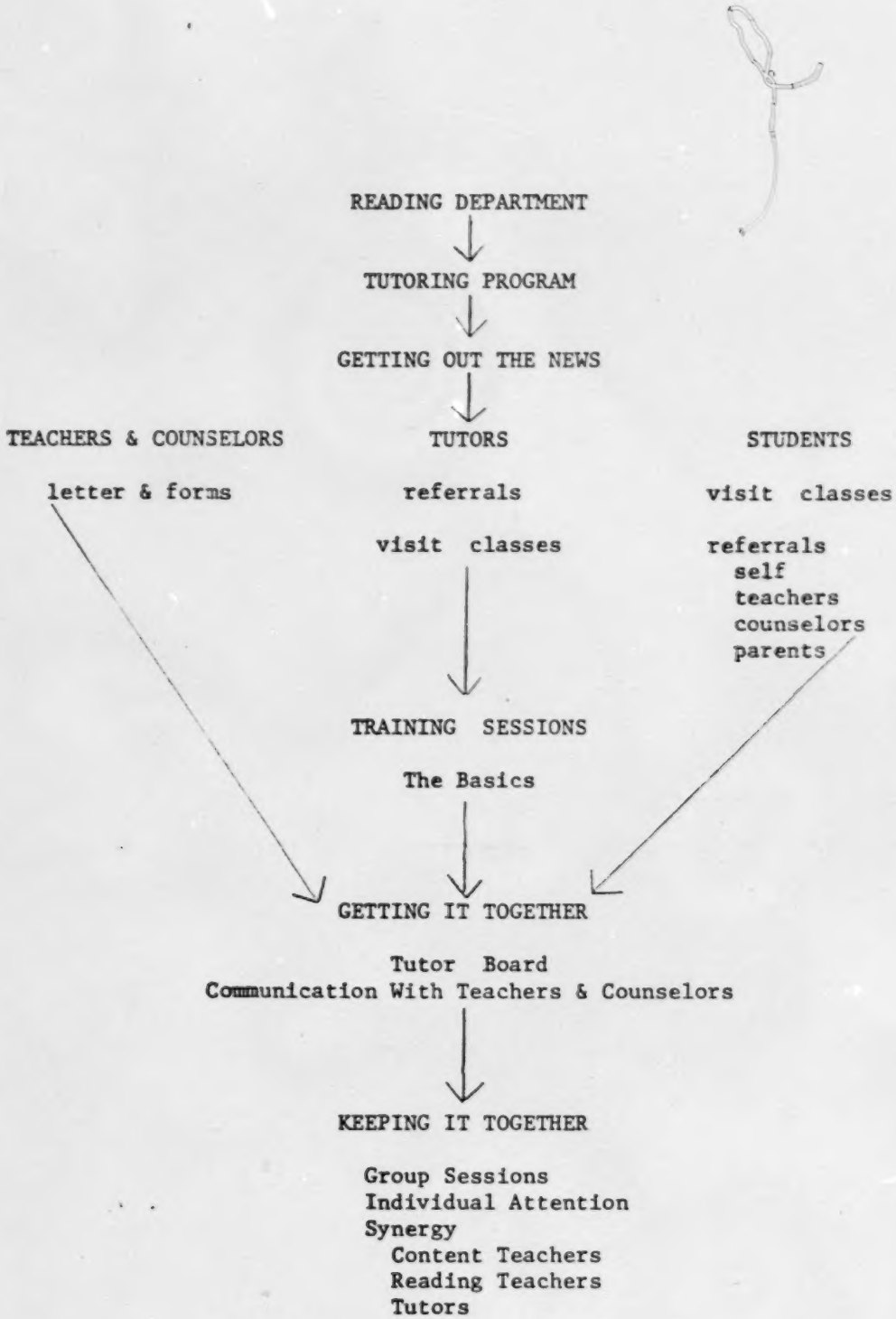
Each year West seems to receive several students newly arrived from the Oriental countries and assigning a tutor to each of these students for one or more periods a day has proved an effective method in assisting them in adjusting to the language and customs of the United States.

The program has changed slightly in the five years of its existence as its role as a total school program became more clearly defined. The basic concept - Reading in the Content - has remained constant.

A Curriculum Guide for Training Tutors has been developed as well as a Handbook for Tutors and a Teacher's Guide containing many of the administrative procedures. A Bibliography for Tutors has been developed and video tapes for tutor training have been produced. Also a professional growth class in Organizing, Administering and Implementing Peer Tutoring Programs has been facilitated.

Other schools in the Phoenix Union High School District have programs that closely parallel the one at West High, and several other high schools in the State have been assisted in starting their own program.

Evaluation by the students year after year emphasizes the personal growth of the tutors as well as a feeling of satisfaction in having helped others. The students being tutored are generally positive about the help they have received and frequently indicate they will seek assistance again should the need arise. The Tutoring Program is generally felt to be a positive influence on campus and an asset to the whole school.


READING DEPARTMENT
TUTORING PROGRAM
GETTING OUT THE NEWS
TEACHERS & COUNSELORS
letter & forms
TUTORS
referrals
visit classes
STUDENTS
visit classes
referrals
self
teachers
counselors
parents
TRAINING SESSIONS
The Basics
GETTING IT TOGETHER
Tutor Board
Communication With Teachers & Counselors
KEEPING IT TOGETHER
Group Sessions
Individual Attention
Synergy
Content Teachers
Reading Teachers
Tutors

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

Central High School is another school in the Phoenix Union High School District, and its program is as follows:

The Volunteer Tutoring Program at Central High School is a project of the National Honor Society. The number of students eligible for National Honor Society varies between 100 and 120 with 80 active members. In order to remain as a senior member, they must accumulate twenty tutoring points per year.

Although most National Honor Society members are taking six classes and are active in extra-curricular activities some have 80 hours of tutoring to their credit. They tutor before and after school, and during their lunch hour. In the library, on the lawn, the resource center, in any niche they can take over.

The sponsor of the National Honor Society is a Reading Resource Teacher who coordinates the tutoring service. The Coordinator must sell the tutoring program to the faculty, administrators, counselors and students, but she has help - the National Honor Society.

Students are made aware of the service through the Daily Bulletin and the school newspaper.

Tutors are trained in the Study Skills Techniques in the specific content area in which they will be tutoring.

Tutors and students to be tutored complete an information card with their name, student number, daily class schedule and the tutoring subject area. The Coordinator interviews the students requesting help to obtain a basis for the tutoring sessions. If the subject is geometry, they are asked, "Do you know your theorems? If chemistry, "Do you know your formulas?" If foreign language, "Do you know your verb conjugations?" If not, they are instructed in the art of making flash cards and informed that it is their responsibility to memorize these before meeting with their tutor.

The tutors and students to be tutored are matched by subject area, lunch hour and if possible with someone who is thought to be able to meet the individual needs of the student being tutored. The first meeting is arranged by the Coordinator. After the first meeting, it is the responsibility of the tutor to arrange the time and place of subsequent sessions.

The tutor must complete a record sheet that lists the student being tutored's name, plan of action, instruction that actually took place and the date and amount of time spent tutoring. The student being tutored must attest to this by signing the report after each tutoring session.

A Tutoring Completion Report is filled out and returned to the Coordinator when the student no longer needs help. In this way the Coordinator knows that the tutor is available to assist another student. Those requesting tutoring are not the lowest academically, but are ones who have been successful in the classroom. The lowest students are helped in the Learning Resource Center.

There is no waiting list. The school has been able to serve all those who have applied for a tutor. Occassionally, there has been a struggle to fill all the request for help in Algebra.

It is difficult to assess this type of tutoring program. However, Central High School thinks the program is a success. It is successful for the tutors because so many of them have exceeded the twenty point requirement - they must be receiving some positive reinforcement. Successful for the student being tutored - they must feel good about it. A success for the National Honor Society Service Project in reaching its goal by being of service to the community.

ALHAMBRA HIGH SCHOOL

Alhambra, another Phoenix Union High School, involves their tutors in a Freshman Communications Program only. It is explained here.

Freshman Communications is a core program involving English, reading and social studies, which freshman students may enroll in rather than the "regular" classes. The emphasis in this program is on communication and interpsersonal relationship skills. This is the first year a teacher has been assigned to coordinate the program, and her sole responsibility is with the tutors.

The tutors are 10th, 11th and 12th graders who were previously involved in the Freshman Communications program and were screened and selected by the core teachers and tutor director. After going through a two-week training session the tutors receive students to work with. They tutor four days a week, the fifth day is in-service on "group session" day where there is some input from counselors.

Students in the Freshman Communications Program who are having problems in the basic skills are assigned to a group where a tutor will assist them for a limited time. This is small-group work instead of one-to-one assistance. Here the tutors are actively involved in instruction of the basic English and reading skills.

Although the students are improving in their English and reading skills, the tutoring situation does not seem to be as satisfying in the other apsects of personal growth that tutoring programs should provide.

MESA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

WESTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

Westwood High School in the Mesa District has still another approach to tutoring. It is most nearly like the one at West High School.

The town of Mesa is heavily influenced by the Morman religion, and therefore the class schedules are built around a seminary (religious class) period. This takes the place of a study hall or free period, so most of the students have no free time.

The tutoring program operates out of a large double room with two small study rooms. Music plays softly and there is an emphasis on a relaxed atmosphere. There is a full-time Reading Specialist assigned to the running of the program.

There is very regular attendance from the 61 tutors and the 70 students who receive extra help. The tutors work four days a week, and one day is spent on group session. These tutors receive regular academic credit for being in the program. The students who receive help come from a variety of subject areas from driver's education to social studies. These students are out of the classroom two to four days a week and are working one-to-one with a tutor.

There is close contact with the content area teachers as the students are coming out of their classes in order to be tutored. This necessitates taking roll both in the classroom and in the tutoring room. Grades for the students are arrived at through a conference with the teacher, the tutor and the tutor director. This usually brings about a good close relationship with the teachers, tutors, students and all others involved. The teachers send a weekly lesson plan to their student's tutor so that the tutor can make up his weekly plans and devise activities to use with the student. This situation lends itself to building upon the materials the students bring from the classroom, as the purpose of tutoring is to aid students in the reading and the learning skills required in the content areas. Also, emphasized is building up the self-concepts of the students.

One negative point is that often times there is a restriction on activities and the tutor must do what the content area teacher has planned and is therefore accountable to them.

This tutoring program has been extremely successful year after year. The great thing about tutoring is that it is flexible and can be incorporated into most any school situation.

EVALUATION

As in all areas of education, there is a need to evaluate the tutoring program. This is carried out in order to find out the specific strengths and weaknesses so that the program can be improved.

There is no pre and post-testing due to the fact that this program emphasizes teaching reading and study skills and learning skills in general as they relate to all the different content areas. Also stressed is the building of self-concepts which is difficult to objectively evaluate. Therefore, two "teacher-made" evaluation forms were developed. The first type calls for open-ended answers, the second is based on the Likert scale. Individual forms for teachers, students and tutors were designed to attain the most accurate information.

OPEN-ENDED EVALUATIONS

Some sample answers and responses from the students as they pertained to question five - "What do you like best about your tutor?"

- good listener
- he/she explained things well
- he/she was patient
- he/she was understanding
- he/she was happy

According to the tutors' forms in response to question one, "Do you feel your student benefitted from the program?" they responsed

51 Yes

3 No

In response to why or why not

- study skills improved
- improved vocabulary
- longer attention span
- he passed

In question three, the tutors were asked to repond to the question, "What did you gain from the tutoring experience?" A few answers are as follows:

- self satisfaction
- improved study habits and techniques
- helped improve my patience

Teachers are an integral part of the total tutoring program. Some of their responses follow:

- My students showed an improvement in class attendance.
- My students paid more attention in class.
- My students improved the quality of their work.
- My students improved grades for the class.
- You have a good program - I've sent you some real cases.

LIKERT SCALE EVALUATION FORM

Many students come to the tutoring program with poor self-concepts and therefore we strive to help them feel more positively about themselves. According to last year's statistics at Westwood 70% of the students who had received tutorial assistance felt they had gained more self confidence. Again 70% of the students helped felt they had improved their grades as well as their reading and study skills.

According to the forms the tutors completed, 84% felt they had learned to be more patient, 79% could communicate better and 87% felt a great deal of self-satisfaction and self-confidence. This is just a few of the answers and responses gathered.

HELPFUL HINTS

We've found that no matter what type evaluation form is used, it is of utmost importance to explain to everyone the purpose of the evaluating process, otherwise, many may feel that they are being imposed upon to do more paperwork. Also, it is best to have these forms evaluated anonymously, as it encourages a more honest and accurate appraisal of the program.

Once the information is gathered and tallied, it benefits the total tutoring program if copies of the evaluation results are given to EVERYONE involved with the program.

Remember - continued evaluation is important no matter what type of program is implemented. It is a valuable check to make sure the program is meeting each student's needs.

IN BOTH THE WEST HIGH AND WESTWOOD HIGH SCHOOLS TUTORS ARE TRAINED ALONG THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES.

GUIDE FOR TRAINING STUDENT TUTORS

The major concepts that are necessary in training tutors for a successful program seem to be:

1) Knowledge of the structure and administration of the program.

2) Academic skill training for use in actual tutoring sessions.

3) Experiences to foster personal growth and fulfillment.

Category	Goals/Objectives	Activities	Media/Materials
I. ADMINISTRATION & STRUCTURE Pertaining to administrative & clerical matters necessary for smooth functioning and coordination of efforts.	The tutor will become knowledgeable of the program and will demonstrate this knowledge by performing the tasks that pertain to him and his student.	Training sessions concerning: 1. History of program 2. Structure of program 3. Admittance of tutors and students 4. Weekly schedule 5. Forms 6. Lesson planning 7. Record keeping 8. Basic Instruction in Ed. Philosophy 9. Discretion & Confidentiality	Tutor Handbook charts tutor logs video tapes chart of program structure transparencies of forms, etc.

Category	Goals/Objectives	Activities	Media/Materials
II. ACADEMIC Knowledge of facts and understanding of concepts, methods and techniques of use in tutoring.	The tutor will acquire a basic understanding of the supportive skills necessary to function successfully in the various content areas, and demonstrate these skills in the tutoring situation.	Training session in which the following skills will be emphasized: A. Study Skills 1. Study method or formula 2. Study habits and time use 3. Dictionary skills 4. Diagnostic materials 5. Textbook organization 6. Readability of texts 7. Test taking 8. Use of library B. Comprehension Skills 1. Main Idea - details 2. Sequence 3. Inference 4. Cause - Effect 5. Fact - Opinion C. Word attack and Vocabulary development 1. Basic sight words 2. Structural analysis 3. Phonetic Analysis 4. Contextual meaning D. Flexibility of Rate E. Language skills (foreign language-grammar exercises, etc.) F. Skills pertaining specifically to Math (ie. basic math, computation, formulas, measurements, etc.)	How To Study Tuning In (Zerox) Dolch Basic Sight List Fry's High Frequency List Language Master Webster Word Wheets Kit High interest reading materials Student constructed activities Tutor Handbook Handouts Film Strips Dictionary Tapes Games Self Constructed Devices Probe Ribbit Password Spill & Spell Perquacky

Category	Goals/Objectives	Activities	Media/Materials
III. PERSONAL GROWTH Those things pertaining to growth of the individual in relation to himself and others.	The tutor will grow in understanding of self and others through use of values clarification, group discussion and self evaluation, and will demonstrate this growth through effective performance in his role as a tutor.	Group sessions in which the following subjects will be explored. 1. Goal setting (long & short range) 2. Problem recognition and solving. 3. Use of time (work, study, recreation) 4. Group skills a. Communicating b. Relating c. Listening d. Emphasizing e. Synergising f. Paraphrasing g. Body language 5. Values clarification 6. Emotional reaction (recognizing and controlling) 7. Discretion and confidentiality	Values Clarification by Sidney Simon The Volunteer Tutor (IRA) Training in body language (Zerox Publications) handouts resource persons films games Edge Institute Tell it Like it is

Category	Goals/Objectives	Activities	Media/Materials
ACADEMIC (Continued)		G. Physiological development of adolescents and it's relationship to personal and adademic success. * Tutoring will be administered in these areas; however, the actual content will be under the supervision of the cooperating departments.	